



Photo by OAR/National Undersea Research Program

The MMA database categories are grouped into five areas: structural, legal, location/size, management, and information sources. These include information on site description, legal protection, threats, and the purposes and restrictions of management zones. Public comment is being sought on the proposed data fields, definitions, and database structure.

Given the broad scope of the ultimate MMA list and larger inventory, site designation and subsequent data collection will proceed in a phased approach, beginning with federal and federal/state partnership sites, working with officials from states, territories, tribes and local levels.

### Developing the State Inventory Database

The inventory team will work with the local MMA manager or staff to develop the database. The team has outlined quality control and assurance procedures for data consistency and accuracy, and a final data update and revision process will ensure that the information in the inventory is current.

The complete database will include descriptive information, such as location, physical and biological features, authorities, management approaches, and threats. The database supports network building and future analyses of state management of MPAs.

### Data Collection Schedule

Phase I (underway): Conservation and cultural sites which fully meet the working criteria of an MMA

Phase II: De facto sites: those areas that have been protected for a reason other than marine conservation (defense, navigation, utilities and Telecom, pollution zones, public health, recreation and others)

### Projected Data Collection Timeline

Visit [mpa.gov](http://mpa.gov) to see the current status of the inventory.

Federal sites: complete information by January 2004

State sites: complete draft of information by January 2004

Tribal sites: complete draft of information by January 2004

### Some Benefits of a System of Marine Protected Areas

There are many benefits to participating in developing a national network of marine protected areas. Some of these include:

- to protect and restore biodiversity
- to protect endangered/rare species
- to protect ecosystems and habitats
- to restore and enhance fisheries in surrounding areas
- to provide educational opportunities
- to protect or improve recreational opportunities
- to protect or improve opportunities for tourism
- to protect cultural and historical resources
- to provide economic benefits to local communities and the nation
- to protect traditional lifestyles

For additional information, visit [www.mpa.gov](http://www.mpa.gov), or contact:

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# The National Marine Protected Areas Initiative State Inventory of Marine Managed Areas

### Why is an Inventory Needed?

Presidential Executive Order 13158 included requirements to develop a national system of marine protected areas (MPAs) and publish a list of MPAs. The National MPA Center has been charged with these tasks, and has been publishing completed data on [www.mpa.gov](http://www.mpa.gov).

Initial development was focused specifically on quickly meeting the listing requirement of the Executive Order. However, the data collection team soon recognized the complexity of collecting, analyzing, and classifying information about sites designated and managed by agency programs at the federal level, by the 35 coastal states, territories, and commonwealths, as well as by tribes and local governments. As a result, the initial phase of the listing task is the development of a national inventory of marine managed areas (MMAs) from which the list of MPAs will be selected. The MMA inventory will be used to generate the MPA list, conduct the scientific analyses needed to define and support the national system of MPAs, also Executive Order requirements, and determine which existing sites effectively meet the goals of the national system.



Photo by R. Beltran

### About Marine Managed Areas and the State Inventory

A marine protected area refers to any area of the marine environment that has been reserved by federal, state, territorial, commonwealth, tribal, or local laws or regulations to provide lasting protection for part or all of the natural and cultural resources within them. Marine protected area is a broad, inclusive term which includes both multi-purpose sites with some restrictions as well as the more restrictive "no take marine reserves." The term marine managed area encompasses a broader spectrum of management purposes, including protection of geological, cultural, or recreational resources that may not meet all the MPA criteria or have a conservation purpose.

A database of state MMAs is needed because there is no comprehensive database currently available. In addition, there are many existing MMA sites, but few networks in place. A database of federal MMAs is mostly complete, and provides a number of benefits, including:

- The foundation for building regional and national networks
- Baseline information for assessing effectiveness and determining high risk sites
- Spatial analysis for management decisions

### Components of the State Inventory Database

A critical step in building the marine managed areas inventory is determining the information needed to characterize each site. The data compiled will fulfill four purposes:

1. To support the development of science-based management approaches to effectively conserve individual sites and networks of sites
2. To support the development of a national system of MMAs
3. To identify sites so that federal agencies may ensure that they cause them no harm
4. To provide a management tool for resource managers

